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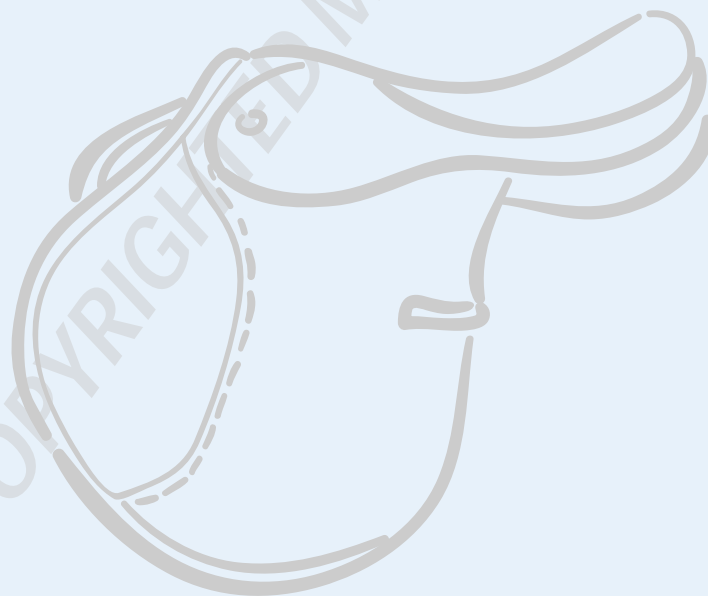
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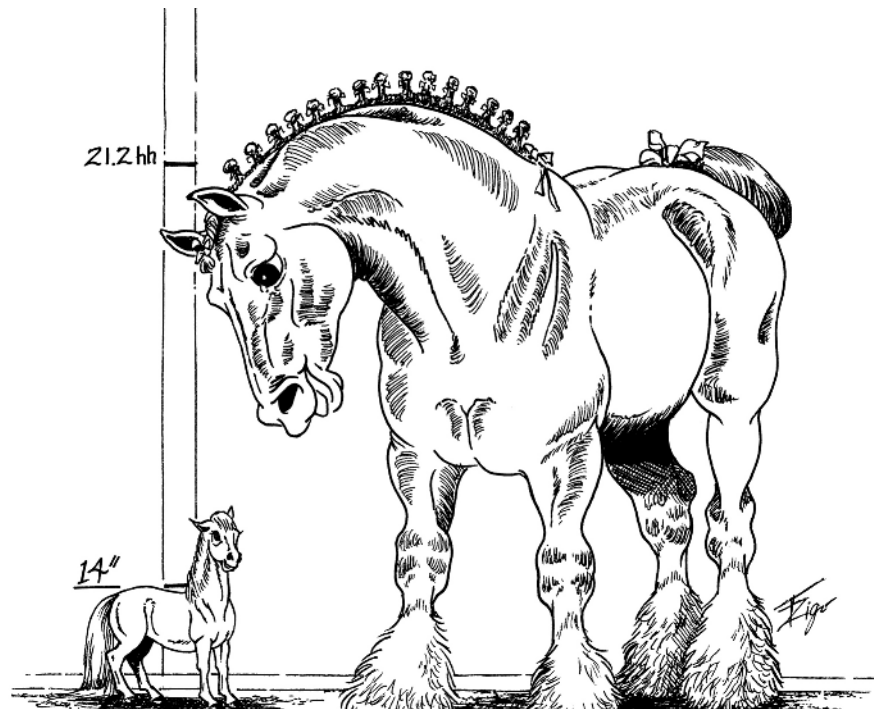
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The term “drop a stick” on a horse means to measure her height; that is, to see how tall she is. A horse’s height is measured in *hands*, from the ground to her *withers*—the bone at the point where her mane ends and her back begins. Each hand equals four inches, originally based on the average width of a human hand. A horse that is said to be fifteen hands is actually sixty inches tall at the withers. If a horse measures more than an exact number of hands, the extra inches are shown after a decimal point, so a horse that is fifteen hands and three inches is written 15.3 hh. The tallest horse ever recorded is a Shire named Samson, who stood just over 21.2 hh. Keeping in mind that a hand is four inches, this horse stood over seven feet tall! The shortest horse in history was named Little Pumpkin, who stood a mere fourteen inches tall.



“

Training a horse is like an abbreviated process of raising a child. Fortunately it doesn't take as long to train a horse as it does to raise a child, but in the end, we want the same result for both – we want to see that child and that horse go out and do the best possible.

”

—Richard Shrake, *Resistance Free Training*





Can't decide where to go for vacation? Make plans to attend one of the exciting and informative equine expos (or horse expos) across the country. These expos are your chance to learn from a variety of clinicians, all gathered together in one place. Search online or call your breed association for a schedule of events. And book your trip early, because hotels fill up quickly!

According to the American Horse Council, there are more than 9.2 million horses in the United States. Specifically, they are used for:

Recreation	42%
Showing	30%
Racing	9%
Other	19%



It is estimated that there are 256,000 horses in Colorado alone, which generate \$956 million. That is quite a contribution to the national economy.



If you're a science buff, the scientific classification of the horse is as follows:



Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Subphylum: Vertebrata
Class: Mammalia
Subclass: Theria
Infraclass: Eutheria
Order: Perissodactyla
Family: Equidae



Although only about 11 percent of the world's human population is left-handed, a horse is usually led and mounted from the left side.



The average horse's heart, considered the center of everything both physical and emotional, weighs approximately eight and a half to nine pounds.



The American Quarter Horse is appropriately named for its ability to run a quarter mile at high speed. The American Quarter Horse Association is the world's largest single breed equine association, with approximately 350,000 members and more than 4.5 million registered horses.



Winter weather not only makes a leather bridle brittle, it also makes a bit a bit too cold. (Try saying that three times quickly!) Keep your leather in excellent shape and offer your horse a nice, warm bit by bringing your bridle into the house with you at night, or by tucking it inside your winter coat while you groom and saddle your horse.



The most common facial markings on a horse are:

- ★ Star: A white patch on the forehead, usually between the eyes
- ★ Strip: A white patch that extends lengthwise down the face and is no wider than the nasal bones
- ★ Blaze: Wider than a strip, a white patch that covers the forehead and the front of the horse's face and extends down toward the mouth
- ★ Snip: A patch of white between the nostrils

Common leg color markings are:

- ★ Coronet: The hair just above the hoof is white
- ★ Pastern: A white band that includes the coronet and pastern
- ★ Sock: White hair that comes to just above the fetlock
- ★ Stockings: White hair that comes all the way up to just below the knee



Horses should have clean, fresh water available at all times. The rule of thumb is to ask yourself whether or not you would drink it. If the answer is no, it's definitely time to clean the water buckets.

“ You are a great champion. When you ran, the ground shook. The sky opened and mere mortals parted. Parted the way to victory where you will meet me in the winner’s circle. Where I will lay a blanket of flowers on your back. ”

—Dakota Fanning and Kris Kristofferson in *Dreamer*



If you opt to keep your horse in a stall, it’s recommended that the stall be no smaller than 10 feet x 10 feet for an average size horse. She should be able to move and turn with ease. Ensure a safe environment by entering the stall periodically to check for protruding nails, holes in the wall, or broken boards. Keep the stall clean and dry and limit the time your horse spends inside. Nothing is better for your horse than fresh air and sunshine. On rainy days when your horse will be spending more time inside, keep a radio in the barn tuned to her favorite station, and be sure the barn is well ventilated.

China boasts the largest population of horses, estimated at over eight million.





“ I saw a child that couldn’t walk, sit on a horse, laugh and talk . . . I saw a child who could only crawl, mount a horse and sit up tall. I saw a child born into strife, take up and hold the reins of life. And that same child was heard to say, thank God for showing me the way. ”

—John Anthony Davis





New Year’s Day is not only the first day of the year; it’s the day that all registered horses turn one year older. Happy Birthday to the horse!



According to the American Horse Council, approximately one out of every sixty-three Americans is involved in horses to some extent. This means that 4.6 million Americans are involved in the equine industry in some way. Are you one of them?



One of the biggest misconceptions among newcomers to the horse world is that a pony is a young horse. This is not true. The term *foal* is used to describe a young horse. Ponies are a classification of equine breeds that are generally shorter than breeds considered horses. While not a hard and fast rule, it is usually true that breeds fourteen-and-a-half hands and under are considered ponies, and larger breeds are generally referred to as horses.



There are approximately 75 million horses in the entire world, and no two are exactly alike. That makes them sort of like snowflakes, doesn't it?



Unlike human teeth, horses' teeth continue to grow throughout their lives. The diet of a modern-day horse may not provide enough grit to keep the teeth worn down to a normal level, which can lead to many problems if left unchecked. Your horse's teeth should be floated (filed) once a year.



There are twelve animals that represent the Chinese New Year, and the horse is one of those twelve animals. This means that every twelve years truly is the year of the horse.



In order for a horse to learn, she must be relaxed, calm, and focused. Horses have excellent memories, and if you teach a horse through trust and patience, she can learn a great deal. If taught with force and fear, the only thing she will learn is to despise you.

Afraid you may not be able to afford a horse?
Some figures from the American Horse Council
should help you decide. Approximately 46 percent
of horse owners have an income between \$25,000
and \$75,000, and only 28 percent have an income
over \$100,000.



There are more than 350 breeds of horses and
ponies.



Here is a little rhyme to remind you of some of the
more basic color possibilities of a horse.

*Black, brown, bay
Sorrel, chestnut, grey
Buckskin, dun, paint, or pinto
Appaloosa, Palomino
These are the basic colors that go
With almost every horse I know.*

On the back of the fetlock joint is a small horny growth called an *ergot*. It is believed to be a lingering remnant of the prehistoric horse. Depending on the horse, the ergot can be barely noticeable or may grow long enough that you may want to ask your farrier to trim it.



Before heading to Alabama, you should probably know that it is illegal to wrestle bears, to play dominoes on Sunday, to wear a mask in public, and to open an umbrella on the street for fear of spooking horses.



For a hoof injury, a disposable diaper secured with duct tape makes an excellent alternative to expensive packing and bandaging.

“ If you have it, it is for life. It is a disease for which there is no cure. You will go on riding even after they have to haul you on to a comfortable wise old cob, with feet like inverted buckets and a back like a fireside chair. ”

—Monica Dickens, *Talking of Horses*





It has been said that, “You can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink.” You can, however, encourage him to drink by flavoring the water with apple juice or a flavored sports drink.



If you encounter a horse with a red ribbon tied in his tail, this is usually a sign that she is known to kick.





Did you know that a red horse is referred to as a sorrel?





“ To come face to face with my fantasy,
to once again feel whole. To look into
your eyes and realize the depth of my
own soul. ”

—The author, from her poem “Iron Horse”



In parts of Indiana, think twice before you
give a cigarette to a monkey, sell a car on
Sunday, catch a fish with your bare hands,
and most importantly, before you pass a
horse on the street. All of these acts could
land you in jail—well, technically anyway.



There are horses living in every state in the nation, 45 of which have at least 20,000 horses each.



Horses are herbivores, which means that they primarily consume plant material. While they may consume some insects or even small rodents while grazing, plants meet almost all their nutritional needs. Horses have small stomachs, so they cannot digest large amounts of food at one time. Horses should be fed small amounts at a time, and feeding times should be spread over a period of ten to twelve hours.



An excellent winter treat for your horse is to mix up a batch of oatmeal and add some applesauce and a little cinnamon. It contains everything that your horse loves and warms them from the inside out.



According to the American Horse Council, a whopping 2 million people own horses and the industry as a whole pays the government an estimated \$1.9 billion in taxes each year.



Old Billy, who lived to be 62 years old, is the oldest recorded horse. Born in England, this draft horse lived from 1760 to 1822.



When barbed wire was patented back in 1874, it was appropriately referred to as *the devil's rope*, due to the damage it could cause to horses and livestock. Yet even now, barbed wire is still in common use in the United States.



Every year in October, Quarter Horse enthusiasts gather in Columbus, Ohio, for the world's largest single breed horse show. The All American Quarter Horse Congress is a three-week event that attracts more than 650,000 attendees, exhibitors, and merchants from all over the world.



A horse who is well cared for should live well into her mid to late twenties. A horse's advanced age becomes apparent by characteristics such as a sway back, a loss of teeth, and a thinning of the body.



Miniature horses are now being trained and used as assistance animals. The prototype for such useful animals is said to have been a mini by the name of Twinkie.



A horse is considered an adult at just 4 years of age. A horse's father is referred to as his *sire*, while his mother is called his *dam*.





“ If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride. ”

—Old Scottish Proverb



Horses have some unique jobs, and just one of those jobs is to help in physical therapy. The American Hippotherapy Association concludes that hippotherapy, the use of horses in physical therapy, has been shown to improve muscle tone, balance, posture, coordination, motor development, and emotional well-being in people with disabilities.



Thrush is an anaerobic bacterial disease of the horse's hoof, easily diagnosed by the presence of a distinct foul odor in the hoof. Keeping your horse's hooves clean and dry is the best prevention, but if your horse does develop thrush, consult your veterinarian for the best course of treatment.



Tens of millions of people attend horse-related events each year. If you're not yet one of them, you might consider finding a show near you.



Every horse has his or her own *sweet spot*, a particular spot where she likes to be scratched. Whether it is under the jaw line, on the chest, or up at the top of her tail, find your horse's sweet spot and scratch it now and then, and she will look forward to your coming to the barn.

When teaching a horse to lead beside you, never turn and look at the horse. Keep your eyes straight ahead and lean forward slightly. Your body language and slight pressure on the lead will encourage her to move forward.



The North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) has more than 650 certified riding centers across the United States and Canada that offer more than 30,000 individuals therapy through the use of horses, proving once again that horses are good for the body and soul.



A horse who is younger than 3 years old has an attention span of about fifteen minutes, so keep your lessons short.

A *stallion* is a male horse who is capable of reproduction; a *gelding* is a male horse who has been altered so that he can no longer reproduce. A *mare* is a female horse. Stallions become sexually aware between 1 and 2 years of age, but most are not mentally mature enough for breeding until they are 3 to 5 years old. Of course, this depends on the individual stallion; like people, horses are individuals and mature at their own rates.



Horses are physically incapable of vomiting.



Horses are not predatory animals and are themselves prey animals. Their instinct tells them to flee from—rather than confront—danger.

If given free roaming pasture space, the average horse will graze for ten to fifteen hours each day. However, the types of grasses in any pasture vary greatly, and some plants and grasses can be toxic. For example, some fescue grasses can actually be quite dangerous to the pregnant mare, causing complications in pregnancy and delivery. It's important to know what's growing in your pasture and remove any toxic plants.



Colostrum is the first milk that a foal receives from her mother. It is extremely rich and contains the necessary antibodies and protein that a new foal requires. A young horse's first set of teeth are referred to as *milk teeth*, which are eventually replaced by permanent teeth between the ages of 3 and 5. Most horses have all of their adult teeth by the age of 5.



A baby horse is described as a *foal* for the first year of life. A *colt* is a boy, and a *filly* is a girl.